

Growth: 1985 through 1992
Nancy White, MS, PT, OCS

This article is the third in a 4-part series celebrating the history of the Orthopaedic Section over the past 25 years. The first 2 articles were written by Stanley Paris and Dorothy Santi and Carolyn Wadsworth described the enthusiasm, vision, and ideals of the founding members and the dedication and perseverance of those who were committed to developing a strong organization to accomplish their goals. This article covers the time period between 1985 and 1992.

The Section's first decade was marked by tremendous growth and by the establishment of priorities including: achieving specialist certification, protecting the practice of orthopaedic physical therapy, and obtaining national and international recognition for the Section and its members. The second decade will be remembered by many for the achievement of several of these goals and for the significant steps we took toward the accomplishment of others. Recognition of the orthopaedic clinical specialist, the development of high-quality educational programs for Section members, and the emergence of the Section as a major contributor to physical therapy research were all highlights during this time period.

SPECIALIZATION

Hundreds of Section members contributed literally thousands of hours and untold amounts of energy to the dream of achieving recognition of specialty practice in orthopaedic physical therapy. It is the Section's hope that several of these individuals will contribute to a later article highlighting the dreams, frustrations, and victories that occurred along the road to specialization.

It was the strong feeling of many of the early proponents of specialization that a practical examination was necessary to adequately assess the skill level of physical therapists seeking recognition as orthopaedic clinical specialists. Considerable time, energy, and financial resources were spent in an attempt to develop and validate a combined practical and written examination. Because of the numerous and varied approaches utilized in orthopaedic physical therapy practice in the United States in the 1980s, it became clear that reaching consensus on a practical examination by the agreed upon deadlines was

close to impossible. The target examination date had been extended numerous times and both financial and human resources were running short.

The Orthopaedic Competency Document, originally written by Carolyn Wadsworth and Jim Robinson, was finalized by Betty Sendelar, Eileen Volowitz, and Richard Bowling. This document was finally approved by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) in 1987. This provided the blueprint for the Specialty Council to put the finishing touches on the exam and set a date for its administration.

In April 1988, the members of the Orthopaedic Specialty Council and subcommittees resigned when the disagreement with the ABPTS regarding the inclusion of a practical component for the examination could not be resolved. Addition of a reliable and valid practical examination was not ruled out for future examinations.

In May 1988, Section President Jan Richardson appointed a new Specialty Council. The new Council members, Joe McCulloch (Chair), Rick Ritter, and Susan Stralka, utilized the work of previous Specialty Councils to prepare and administer the examination. The Orthopaedic Competency Document and hundreds of test items developed under the leadership of previous Specialty Councils were used by the new council to finalize the examination.

Final approval of the application process and the criteria to sit for the examination were approved by the ABPTS in 1988. By September 1988, all test items were ready for the meeting between the Specialty Council and the testing agency for final examination development. Due to a sudden change in testing services, the process was again put on hold and a new examination date was set for June 1989. With the new date set, the Specialty Council spent many long days with test preparation consultants reviewing, referencing, and refining each test item. It was clear that accurately defining advanced clinical practice and ensuring that the examination reflected this practice would be an ongoing process. But the first examination was finally ready!!

The first specialist examination was administered on-site on June 10, 1989, at APTA's Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Twenty-six individuals passed the exam and became the first Board Certified Specialists in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy.

The Specialty Council continued its work to refine the examination and to add additional questions to the item bank through the continuation of item writer workshops. Specialty Council member, Mary Milidonis, prepared a 2-year plan to develop the Description of Advanced Clinical Practice in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy that is used today. By 1992, there were 185 Board Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialists.

The topic of a practical examination continued to be discussed and debated. Several members who originally fought hard for the inclusion of the practical component realized the ongoing difficulty in developing and validating such an examination. Many of these individuals began the early work toward a goal that is finally being realized today—the certification of clinical residency programs. It is the hope of the Section that the dreams of the early pioneers in orthopaedic physical therapy specialization will finally be realized with a combination of written examination and a certified clinical residency program.

EDUCATION

The Orthopaedic Section has always enjoyed a strong reputation for providing high-quality, low-cost educational programs for its members. The Education Committee Chairs, Jan Richardson (1985-1987) and Annette Iglarsh (1987-1992), deserve much of the credit for the tremendous growth in the area of postprofessional continuing education within the Orthopaedic Section.

In support of clinical specialization, the Section developed the continuing education course, Review of Advanced Competencies in Orthopaedics. The course was first held in 1988 and was tremendously popular among physical therapists preparing for the specialist examination. The course continued to be offered on an annual or semi-annual basis for 8 years and was held in different geographic regions. Section officers attended these courses and held small, informal membership meetings in an attempt to reach Section members who might not regularly attend national meetings.

The first meetings to discuss the production of a home study course were held in 1988. Continuing education was becoming mandatory in many states and financial pressures were making travel to courses difficult for many physical therapists. After an initial attempt to contract with an outside publisher, the Section began the in-house publication of its tremendously popular Home Study Course series. Annette Iglarsh, Chair of the Education and Program Committee, worked to develop the series. Kent Timm served as the first Editor and Sharon Klinski was Managing Editor.

Educational programming at Combined Sections Meetings also grew tremendously during this time period. The development of Special Interest Groups and Roundtables led to the need for specialized programming. In addition to combined programming with other Sections, the Orthopaedic Section began offering specialized programming in occupational health, manual therapy, performing arts, foot and ankle, head and neck, and pain management. During this time period, the Orthopaedic Section's program for CSM progressed from a simple, half page offering with no overlap of programs to the extensive, highly-specialized program we enjoy today.

RESEARCH

From 1985 to 1992, Section Presidents Jan Richardson and Bob Deusinger helped to establish the Orthopaedic Section as a strong supporter of physical therapy research. Due in part to the success of its education programs, the Section had the financial ability to demonstrate this commitment through gifts to the Foundation for Physical Therapy. Because of this early commitment, the Orthopaedic Section became in leader in funding research to evaluate the effectiveness of orthopaedic physical therapy practice.

In 1988, the Orthopaedic Section recognized the vision and contributions of one of its members, Steven J. Rose, with the development of the Rose Excellence in Research Award. This award was announced at the first annual Black Tie and Roses reception, which was held in Dr. Rose's honor at the Combined Sections Meeting in Washington, DC. The Section also established the Steven J. Rose Endowment for Orthopaedic Research for the Foundation for Physical Therapy.

The physical therapy community and the Section experienced a tremendous loss with the death of Steve Rose in 1989. Dr. Rose's contributions to the Section and to physical therapy continue to be recognized and will long be remembered.

PRACTICE

Several practice issues dominated the discussions at Section meetings during this time period. The Position Statement on Manipulation was developed and adopted in 1990. It was recommended at that time that schools show evidence of educational preparation of physical therapists to perform manipulative techniques and that states work to ensure that laws are protective of this practice.

Referral for profit continued to be discussed and debated. The ongoing dilemma of delegation and supervision of physical therapist assistants and physical therapy aides was discussed. Surveys were taken and forums were conducted to determine a consensus among the membership. Although little consensus appeared to exist, the leaders of the Section used the available information to begin to develop a plan for appropriate utilization of support personnel.

The formal development of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) began with the recognition of the Industrial Physical Therapy (now known as Occupational Health Physical Therapists) SIG in 1992. Susan Isernhagen chaired the newly formed group. Founding of the Performing Arts Physical Therapy SIG, the Foot and Ankle SIG, and the Pain Management SIG quickly followed. The result of this development was a broadening in scope of a Section that was originally founded by individuals with a primary interest in manual therapy. The Section realized that its mission included representation of members in a wide array of practice settings. The Section realized that its mission included representation of members in a wide array of practice settings. The Special Interest Group development served to provide a mechanism for members in various orthopaedic practice settings to exchange clinical information, provide education, define and protect practice, and promote and support research. The Section was strengthened in ways it had not expected!

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The educational programs and financial gifts to the Foundation resulted in significant public relations for the Orthopaedic Section within the physical therapy community. Membership in the Section grew from 5,269 to 11,527 between 1985 and 1992. The public relations committee chairs during this time periods, Garvice Nicholson, Jonathan Cooperman, and Karen Piegorsch developed the Section's exhibit booth and brochure and began exhibiting at medical meetings throughout the country.

SECTION PUBLICATIONS

With over 10,000 members, the Section's primary means of reaching its members was through its publications. The *Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy (JOSPT)*, edited by Jim Gould and George Davies, became a monthly publication in 1986 and continued to be one of the Section's greatest benefits for its members. Thanks to the tremendous work of its editors and the support of both the Section's greatest benefits for its members. Thanks to the tremendous work of its editors and the support of both the Orthopaedic and Sports Sections, *JOSPT* continued its development from a newsletter for clinical exchange of information to a scholarly publication. Double-blind review of articles submitted for publication began in 1988.

In 1990, Gary Smidt was hired as the new editor of *JOSPT* and the journal office was moved to Iowa City, Iowa. Recognition of the *JOSPT* in Index Medicus had been a goal of the Section for several years. After numerous attempts, this goal was finally reached in 1992. By this time, *JOSPT* had a full editorial board and had grown both in popularity and respectability.

The *Bulletin of the Orthopaedic Section*, the Section's primary means of communicating Section news to its members, underwent another transition during this period. With the evolution of *JOSPT* to a more scholarly publication, the need existed for a means of exchange of clinical information on a more informal level. In 1989, the Bulletin was renamed *Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Practice (OP)* and was modified to include a combination of Section news, legislative and practice issues, and clinical articles. Christine Saudek was the Editor for the first year of publication. John Medeiros became Editor in 1990 and initiated the practice of writing editorials relating to practice issues. Often controversial, and never

tame, these editorials have become a tradition. Members who had never found time to read this publication now at least began opening the front cover!

ADMINISTRATION

The tremendous growth in membership resulted in a need for additional staff support and office space. Since its inception in 1979, the JOSPT office had been located in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. In 1985, the Section moved its office to Winter Park, Florida, and contracted with Pat Kirkbride to administer the Section's business. The following year, the Section relocated its headquarters to 505 King Street in LaCrosse, and David Thomack was hired to replace Pat Kirkbride as the Administrative Director. The Section's first computers were purchased for membership and financial records shortly after this move. The Section's growing staff and expanding programs soon resulted in a need for more space. In 1989 the Section moved into a larger office within the same building. Terri DeFlorian (then Pericak) was hired as David Thomack's assistant. With David's departure in 1991, Terri was promoted to Administrative Director.

The development of the Section's educational programs and publications resulted in the need for additional staff. In 1990, Sharon Klinski was hired to coordinate the Section's publications. Tara Fredrickson was hired in 1993 to coordinate the educational courses and to serve as Terri's assistant.

The Section's budget grew from \$200,000 in 1985 to \$1,300,000 in 1992. This increase was due to the growth in Section income resulting from the successful educational courses and the expenses associated with providing these new member benefits. Treasurers, John Wadsworth and Bob Burles, provided great leadership in financial planning and investments during this time of growth. Bob is also credited with bringing the Section into the computer age and earned the title "Mr. Wizard" for his skills and persistence.

By the early 90s, the Section was again outgrowing its space. The Board began discussing the possibilities of purchasing land and building a building to house the Section office. They did not realize how quickly this idea would become a reality!

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1989—First Rose Excellence in Research Award presents to Don Neumann, PhD, PT, Gary Soderberg, PhD, PT, and Thomas Cook, PT for their article “Comparison of Maximal Isometric Hip Abductor Torques Between Hip Sides.”

1990—Section celebrated 15th Anniversary (one year late!) with a gala featuring entertainer Nancy Wilson.

1990—First Paris Distinguished Service Award presented to Stanley Paris, founder of the Orthopaedic Section.

1992—Jim Gould received the Paris Distinguished Service Award.

1992—The American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists (AAOMPT) was formed and held its first meeting in Vail, Colorado. The Orthopaedic Section began both formal and informal dialogue with the AAOMPT in an attempt to coordinate efforts and discuss topics of concern and interest to both groups. Recognition of clinical residency programs was a priority of the founding members of AAOMPT.

SUMMARY

The period of time between 1985 and 1992 was a time of tremendous growth for the Section. The successful educational programs provided wonderful member benefits and were a great source of public relations and revenue for the Section. The leadership kept the Section strong by wise planning and innovative programs. They were successful in implementing specialization in orthopaedic physical therapy and built the groundwork for certification of clinical residency programs. The Section was a leader among APTA components in funding research in physical therapy and set the standard for others to follow.

The possibilities for the Section seemed unlimited in 1992. Demand for physical therapy in the health care arena had grown tremendously and times were great for physical therapists. Fortunately, the Section had laid the groundwork for practice protection and had the financial and organizational strength to be prepared for the challenges that lay ahead.

Nancy T. White, MS, PT, OCS is currently serving as Vice President of the Orthopaedic Section and a Board of Trustee for the Foundation for Physical Therapy.